

REMARKS

Claims 1-28 are pending in the present application. Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the Examiner in view of the remarks set forth below.

In the Final Office Action mailed on November 2, 2005, the Examiner has maintained the rejection of claims 1-7 and 10-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U. S. Patent 6,260,029 ("*Critelli*") in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0013899 ("*Faul*"). Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-7 and 10-15.

Claim 1 is directed to a security envelop. The security envelop comprises a barcode in a two-dimensional symbology located on the security envelope. The barcode encodes a public component and a private component. The public component comprises a digital signature signed by the sender encrypted by the private key of the sender, and the private component comprises a digital signature signed by the sender encrypted by the public key of the receiver. Applicants respectfully submit that the rejected claim 1 is not rendered obvious in view of the applied references.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim features. Additionally, the references must provide a motivation to combine in the manner suggested by the Examiner. Mere conclusory statements to combine are insufficient.

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner alleges that *Critelli* teaches all the elements of claim 1. In particular, the examiner alleges that *Critelli* teaches the private component (non-shipment information, advertising material) comprising a digital signature signed by the sender (Col. 2, lines 60 – Col. 3, lines 5; Col. 3, lines 47-66; Col. 4, lines 1- 14). Thus, the Examiner

alleges that the non-shipping information is digitally signed by the sender. This is plainly incorrect. A closer review of *Critelli* reveals that *Critelli* expressly teaches that the non-shipping information is, in fact, digitally signed by a third party, and not the sender, as called for by claim 1. See *Critelli*, Col. 4, lines 10-15.

The other references cited by the Examiner also do not teach the claimed feature of a private component comprising a digital signature signed by the sender, and the Examiner has not alleged that these references show this feature. Any attempt to rely on any of the other references cited by the Examiner to show this feature would constitute a new basis of rejection that is not necessitated by Applicants' amendments.

In view of the foregoing reasons, claim 1 and its dependent claims are allowable. Moreover, the other claims to the extent call for this feature are also in condition for allowance.

The Examiner also relies on U.S. Patent No. 5,917,925 (*Moore*) to reject some of the dependent claims. However, *Moore* fails to address the above-addressed shortcomings of *Critelli* and *Faul*.

Arguments with respect to other dependent claims have been noted. However, in view of the aforementioned arguments, these arguments are moot and therefore not specifically addressed. To the extent that characterizations of the prior art references or Applicants' claimed subject matter are not specifically addressed, it is to be understood that Applicants do not acquiesce to such characterization. Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

In light of the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully assert that all of the claims 1-28 are allowable. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at the Houston, Texas telephone number (713) 934-4089 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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